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Stratification and Subordination: Change and Continuity in Race Relations

by

E. Yvonne Moss and Wornie L. Reed

One of the measures used to gauge progress made by African-Americans in gaining equal opportunity has been to compare and contrast the status of black Americans to that of white Americans using various social indices. Historically, the status of blacks relative to whites has been one of subordination; race has been a primary factor in determining social stratification and political status. Relations between white and black Americans were established during slavery and the Jim Crow era of segregation. In the infamous *Dred Scott* (1856) decison, U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Taney articulated the fundamental nature of this system of racial stratification: "Blacks have no rights which whites are bound to respect."[1]

James Baldwin perceptively observed that in the sea change from the old worlds to the new, French, English, Spanish, and other Europeans "became white," while the Tokolor, Mandinka, Fulani, and other Africans "became black."[2] Black and white became racial labels denoting power and status. Blacks were slaves; whites were free. Elimination of property requirements in the nineteenth century extended the franchise to all white men and the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment (in the twentieth century) extended the franchise to white women. Not until the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was the franchise extended to all black Americans; and not until the *Brown* decision of 1954 were black Americans granted equal protection under the law. The Civil War outlawed slavery, but it did not eliminate stratification and privilege based on race. White domination continued through segregation laws and practices. The *Brown* decision, the civil rights movement, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 ushered in a new era of race relations. After 300 years of slavery and 100 years of legalized racial oppression, the relations between white and black Americans were now to be based on "equality." The "age of equality," however, has not been accompanied by an end to white domination.

[D]espite improvements in various aspects of American life, racial stratification has not changed in any fundamental sense.

Scholars in this study have sought to evaluate developments in race relations, particularly since 1940, by examining racial stratification, subordination, and change in various aspects of American life. Our general conclusion is that despite improvements in various aspects of American life, racial stratification has not changed in any fundamental sense. In addition to the structural mechanisms that perpetuate differential status, researchers point to social factors—attitudes, values, ideology, and racial violence—that reinforce racial domination. Legal doctrines and the courts have always provided justification and legality for whatever structural form the system of racial stratification has taken. Historically, the U.S. Constitution has been one of the primary supports for white supremacy.

From Slavery to Equality

Relations between black and white Americans are now established by the equality expectations based on the Constitution. This document, which originally sanctioned slavery, then segregation, has since 1954 given legal sanction to the principle of equality. At the time of the American Revolution slavery was sanctioned by the Constitution as a form of white property rights. The concepts of equality articulated by colonists in revolt blurred class distinctions between poor and rich whites, promoting affinity and solidarity at a time when these class distinctions could have undermined the war of liberation against the British.

After independence, an expansion of civil liberties for whites was accompanied by a contraction of civil rights for blacks. Slavery, recognized in the Constitution as a political and economic phenomenon rather than a moral one, provided the essential ingredient by which lower-class whites and upper-class whites could share a common identity as "free men." Slavery, and the racism that justified it, provided a way by which poor whites could simultane-

ously feel superior to enslaved blacks and equal to rich whites in spite of a distinctly different social and class status. In order to maintain this white American kinship, there was the need to keep black Americans in "their place." Citizenship, national identity, and social status in the emerging United States were increasingly defined in terms of race and color. Although Jacksonian Democracy removed property qualifications to extend the franchise for white males, in 1840 most free blacks were legally denied the right to vote.

From the beginning, the Constitution gave the wealthy "planter class" (approximately 7% of all slaveholders) disproportionate power, both nationally and locally. A majority of the justices on the Supreme Court between 1789 and 1865 were themselves slaveowners. Up until the Civil War, constitutional interpretation did not violate the economic and political imperatives of a slave economy dominated by a white, male, landed aristocracy.

After the war, the Civil War Amendments (Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth) along with Reconstruction provided a halting start toward a new basis of race relations. These nascent efforts were brought to an end, however, with the Hayes-Tilden Compromise in 1877 and the withdrawal of Union troops from the South. Racial discrimination against blacks increased at the same time that political democratization increased for whites. In a major test of the Fourteenth Amendment, the Supreme Court legitimized corporations but not the rights of black citizens in the 1873 *Slaughter-House Case(s)*. In those cases, the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, which would become so vital to the restructuring of black/white relations in the mid-twentieth century, was interpreted to provide more protection for corporations (deemed legally to be "persons") than to African-Americans.[3]

The struggles of black Americans and their allies against segregation during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries culminated in the *Brown* decisions (1954 and 1955), the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The White House's support for the modern civil rights movement of the sixties seemed to herald at long last the arrival of the equality revolution. For the first time since the existence of the Freedmen's Bureau during the Reconstruction period, governments not only made laws but constituted themselves as instruments of egalitarian policy. Above all, the courts were now obliged to examine constitutional principles in the light of egalitarian pressures.

With the emergence of the "age of equality," a number of important questions have been raised about race relations, law, and stratification. Can equality expectations eliminate racism and stratification by race and assure that there are no special advantages distributed according to race? Are there economic incentives and penalties capable of inducing the white elite to forsake segregation? And, is it possible that equality will actually sustain, rather than relieve, white domination?

Examination of the issues raised by such questions has led some scholars to argue that although the application of equality is perceived as the extension of democratic principles to all—regardless of race, creed, color, or sex—it is more likely that the equality principle is serving white interests more than those of black people. Historically, advances for African-Americans have been the result of policies primarily intended to serve white interests rather than to provide remedies for racial injustices.[4] Thus, scholars need to examine the contemporary "age of equality" for mechanisms that promote white self-interests at the expense of African-Americans.

[S]ome scholars . . . argue that although the application of equality is perceived as the extension of democratic principles to all—regardless of race, creed, color, or sex—it is more likely that the equality principle is serving white interests more than those of black people.

For instance, one social analyst concludes that just as segregation "shifted" racism out of slavery to assure white exploitation of black labor, so equality "shifts" racism out of segregation to assure the economic demise rather than the exploitation of black people. Socioeconomic disparities coexist with the opportunity for equal rights under the Constitution. Supreme Court rulings have not outlawed racism, it is argued, but instead have actually endorsed a new form of racism to justify white oppression of black Americans. The notion of equality today, then, is as much a racist doctrine as were slavery and segregation before.[5]

The established image of "equality" has meant that African-Americans can possess all manner of civil rights in the abstract, but little property. Wealth remains in white hands so that even under this so-called "equality" the social results are the same. The equality doctrine both masks and justifies the prevailing inequalities. Mechanisms other than color distinction are employed to subjugate black citizens. Growing disparities between black and white Americans coincide with the legal expansion of equal rights. The vigorous replacement of segregation by equality occurs at the same time that black people are being eliminated from the economy.

Socioeconomic Status

Economically, black America is in crisis. The annual income of black families is 57% of white families. The net worth of black American families in

1986 was $3,397, compared to $39,135 for white families, a difference of almost 1200%. In 1985, a National Urban League study indicated that with persistent unemployment and expanding poverty, African-Americans were being left out of the nation's economic recovery.[6] If current trends continue to the year 2000, only 30% of all black men will be employed. Just as the abolition of slavery did not eradicate racism nor the patterns of structural bias based on race, the equality doctrine has also failed to do so. Ironically, contemporary interpretations of the equality principle based on the Constitution seek a "color-blind" society that perpetuates inequality based on race.

When economics, employment, and social class are examined the continued importance of race is clearly evident. While discrimination has lessened in jobs and training programs, racially exclusive practices remain. Limitations on mobility because of race affect the black elite as well as the black poor. The most strikingly favorable indication of racial change is the growth of the middle class among African-Americans. In 1982, using constant dollars, almost 25% of black families had incomes over $25,000 as compared to 8.7% in 1960.[7]

This occupational mobility is a product of three factors: affirmative action, the expansion of public sector employment, and higher levels of education. Between 1966 and 1982 the number of black college students increased from 340,000 to over one million. A number of indicators, however, tend to suggest that such mobility may be slowed if not reversed in the near future. Between 1980 and 1984, black college enrollment dropped by 3%. Concomitantly, the more precarious economic status of black members of the middle class makes them more vulnerable than their white counterparts to economic downturns, government budget cuts, and changes in affirmative action policy.

Just as the abolition of slavery did not eradicate racism nor the patterns of structural bias based on race, the equality doctrine has also failed to do so.

The black middle class is proportionately smaller than the white middle class and is skewed more toward the lower than the upper part of the statistical group. Black professionals occupy lower paying jobs in lower prestige fields than white professionals. Black families tend to be more dependent on two or more wage earners to maintain their middle class status than are white families. Higher proportions of married women in black households work than married women in white households. These factors along with a lower net worth and fewer resources mean that black middle-class families are not as able as white middle-class families to transmit their class position to their children. In some cities—Atlanta, Philadelphia, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Oakland, and the District of Columbia, for example—the growth of middle-class economic status is still significant. However, there is less hope generally for economic advancement for other African-Americans trapped in poverty in urban and rural areas than there was in the sixties.

Noteworthy progress was made between 1959 and 1969 in reducing poverty among African-Americans. The percentage of black citizens who were poor dropped in that decade from 45% to 25%, and the official black family poverty rate declined from 48% to 28%. The net reduction in the number of poor black families was 494,000. However, during the 1970s this black economic progress was reversed as the percentage of blacks who were poor in 1979 had declined less than one-half of one percent during that decade, from 28% to 27.6%, and the black portion of the poor increased to 31%. Over 300,000 more black families were poor in 1979 than in 1969, thus canceling the gains made in the previous decade.[8]

The dimensions of the socioeconomic crisis are even more evident from an examination of the consequences of these worsening economic conditions. More than one-half of all black children grow up in poverty. Unemployment among black teenagers has increased. Many young black men, unsuccessful in school and unable to find legitimate work, turn to hustling and crime. Homicide has become a leading cause of death among young black females as well as among young black males. The economic crisis among the poor has reduced the proportion of black men who work. Traditionally, blacks have been more likely than white men to be in the labor force. Since 1970, however, blacks have been less likely to be in the labor force and many of these workers are unemployed or underemployed.[9] Some analysts estimate that less than one-half of black men are engaged in steady work.

In the area of housing, racial bias has remained pervasive. Throughout most of the half century that the federal government has been involved in housing and urban development, national policies have compounded and supported the discriminatory practices of realtors, banks, insurance companies, and lending companies. A review of major national policy initiatives by officials in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government indicates that during most of the past 50 years federal policies favored segregation and discrimination in housing.

Before 1962, there were three separate housing markets: black, white, and mixed. This situation was supported by federal housing policy in the interest of promoting "homogeneity in neighborhoods." A presidential executive order (11063) issued in 1962 did little to foster fair housing practices. Similarly,

the Civil Rights Act of 1964, so important in other areas, had little impact on open housing. The Civil Rights Act of 1968 was the first attempt to develop a comprehensive fair housing program. Discrimination was made illegal, with some exemptions, in almost all housing. But the law provided more symbolism than substance. Because it was not enforced it had little impact even during national administrations that were favorable to the concept. During the Reagan administration, predictably, even less was accomplished. Discrimination in housing remains widespread, as several studies have demonstrated.

Not only have government policies failed to appreciably diminish racial discrimination in housing, but, unhappily, urban development programs and pro-growth coalitions have pursued urban renewal projects that have destroyed housing, dislocated the poor, and reduced the housing stock in the cities. In addition, there has been little discussion and consideration given to the goal of increasing homeownership among black Americans.

[I]n general terms, white Americans adhere to principles of racial equality and interaction; but in specific contexts of interaction with black Americans, actual practice does not allow the principle.

Residential segregation of black citizens is increasing throughout the nation. Taeuber and Taeuber's national housing segregation index indicates that America's cities are only slightly less segregated today than they were in 1940. The index in 1940 was 85.2. By 1950 that figure had worsened to 87.3. In 1960 there was a slight drop to 86.1, but the segregation index increased during that decade to 87.0. The decade from 1970 to 1980 showed a drop from 87.0 to 81.0. Clearly, America's neighborhoods continue to be "homogeneous" (racially segregated) despite new laws and public proclamations.[10]

Discriminatory practices were reinforced by the patterns of suburbanization after World War II. This suburbanization was supported by government loans and financial policies. But the suburbs were for white households, not black: between 1950 and 1970 African-Americans accounted for only slightly more than 5% of suburban residents. Most black residents who live in suburbs today live in those that are directly adjacent to the nation's largest cities. Fair housing practices have been virtually nonexistent in America's suburbs.

The slow desegregation of white suburbs and neighborhoods is only one aspect of the housing crisis. Progress toward access to safe, affordable, adequate housing has been nil. Public housing projects have generally been failures; often these projects have further isolated poor black people from the rest of society. Inadequate delivery of public services and the absence of competitive and diverse private retail and financial services contribute to the general crisis in housing as well as to other aspects of social and economic deprivation.

White Attitudes

Economic and social deprivation have been the consequences of racial stratification. The system of domination that institutionalizes race-based access to opportunity structures is both reflected in and reinforced by attitudes of white and black Americans. It is interesting to note that the longest running topic in survey research has been the evaluation of white attitudes towards African-Americans. Since World War II, issues related to race in survey research have changed in two ways: the kinds of issues addressed and the ascriptive characteristics associated with the attributes "progressive" and "regressive." Changes in law have made many issues moot. Surveys of white attitudes today indicate that regional differences are less distinct. White attitudes toward black Americans have become more uniform throughout the country.

White Americans still exhibit the duality of orientation that Ellison labeled "ethical schizophrenia" in the 1940s.[11] By this he meant that white Americans demonstrated a sincere belief in the values of democracy, while condoning and justifying decidedly undemocratic treatment of black citizens. Today scholars use the term "symbolic racism" to explain how white Americans can hold egalitarian general racial attitudes at the same time as they disapprove or oppose policies that seek to operationalize equality. Thus, in general terms, white Americans adhere to principles of racial equality and interaction; but in specific contexts of interaction with black Americans actual practice does not allow the principle. One explanation for this paradox lies in the degree of intensity of white contact with black Americans. As long as the intensity of interracial experience is low, whites indicate a willingness to participate in that experience. When the intensity increases, tolerance for interaction wanes. The racial attitudes of whites are directly proportional to the amount of interaction structured by the potential interracial context.

Not much change in racial attitudes is expected among white citizens in the near future because whites do not indicate a willingness to choose interracial contact. Contemporary surveys of whites indicate a reluctance to live with black neighbors, a desire to insulate themselves from contact with black people, and a desire to maintain a social distance from black Americans even while agreeing to formal legal and civil rights for black citizens. This suggests

an insularity at the core of white Americans racial attitudes that may persist for some time. Such conclusions imply an even greater imperative for legal interpretation and government enforcement to promote equal justice and to move towards the breaking up of systems of white domination.

Value Orientations of Blacks

Stratification by race in America has also influenced the development of values among African-Americans. Here, care should be taken—heeding the admonitions of Ellison—not to equate all value orientations among black people as reactions to white domination. The complex relations between the dominant white American culture and the black American subculture creates a variety of sources for the development of social values among African-Americans. Scholars categorize these sources under two typologies: the traditional American value heritage and ideological orientations within black communities. While more work needs to be done on regional variations, rural orientations, and relationships between the two major types, four categories of value orientations have been identified within urban black communities: (1) socially integrated, (2) structurally integrated, (3) structurally isolated, and (4) the excluded sector.

Black people who evidence socially integrated values generally maintain contact with black churches, social clubs, and voluntary associations, even though these are primarily oriented toward the values of the white communities where they live. They wish to be "Americans" in the general sense, although the degree to which this means that they wish to be assimilated as "white" Americans is not clear. Individuals of this orientation are success-oriented, and they demonstrate little support or empathy for confrontational racial protests. Members of these black families develop racially self-directed and self-maintaining values at the same time as they develop civil rights and public policy values for use in the larger, white bureaucratic, formal world. Black families in this category who live and work in desegregated areas tend to equip themselves to live in two different social worlds.

Members of the structurally integrated category work and sometimes live in integrated settings. Most, however, live—and all of them socialize—in a segregated world. Those who live in black neighborhoods do so because they want it that way. They evidence a split value system. On the one hand, they live and work by general "white" American values. At the same time, they articulate well-known black values: that "black is beautiful"; that black history is an important part of their heritage; that black English is acceptable; and that black people are as intelligent and capable as white people. Additionally, they exhibit vigorous civil rights and public policy values.

Black people in the structurally isolated category are generally employed in low-skilled and service sectors of the economy. The class system in the United States isolates these citizens. The economic and work values of those who are structurally isolated are developed through jobs where workers tend to feel cheated and oppressed by those in control. Therefore, the orientation of these black peple is not toward traditional values but toward communal and ideological values of black communities, although some of the traditional values of the group coincide with those of the dominant American values (i.e., values of southern black culture and black church culture). Blacks in this category tend to advocate the self-regarding and self-maintenance values of popular black culture. They acknowledge the importance of black history, culture, and society. Black English is legitimized and black heroes and heroines are idolized. These values sustain the sense of self-worth, boost morales, and serve to legitimize the cause of black people in the white-dominated society. Other value orientations among this group emphasize liberation, creative expression, and achievement. They support civil rights legislation and enforcement as well as the expansion of those gains already made. Collective action and confrontation are viewed as legitimate ways to pursue the struggle for black rights.

Members of the excluded sector are at the bottom of society in terms of economic and social indices. They are marginally employed or unemployed. They have little education and few marketable skills. Black people in this category are ill-housed, excluded from participation in the larger community, and alienated from the general society. Communications are generally broken with family, church, schools, media, and service agencies. Street life, the primary source of the development of values, does not function well to communicate and transmit traditional American values. In any case, many traditional values and social rules are ineffective in the real worlds that these people inhabit. Families in this grouping who stay in tune with traditional values are the exceptions.

Where do values come from in this grouping? They are improvised, borrowed, and developed pragmatically. Traditional values come to be viewed in pejorative and threatening terms. Indigenous values and norms are legitimized and enforced. There is evidence of hostility towards those in white communities as well as suspicion and distrust of white authority, especially the police. Members of this category exhibit support for civil rights efforts.

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In Appreciation of Birago I. Diop: A Subtle Advocate of Négritude

by
Winston E. Langley

The closing weeks of the last decade brought with them the death of three distinguished world figures: Samuel Beckett, the Irish-French playwright, novelist, and poet; Andrei D. Sakharov, the Soviet nuclear physicist, human rights advocate, and leader in the international disarmament movement; and Birago I. Diop, the Senegalese poet, storyteller, and statesman. In the case of the former two, leading U.S. newspapers and other media paid merited tribute in the amplest of proportions; in case of the last, however, it was as if he had either never lived or had gained no standing of importance worthy of much attention. Diop was, it would appear from the behavior of the media, without presence; yet his work is no less significant to the world than that of the other two figures mentioned above. Ironically, he spent the greater part of his life seeking to establish the existence of a presence that the West had, for at least three hundred years, sought to deny.

Birago Diop was born in Dakar (the capital of Senegal) on November 12, 1906.[1] He had his early schooling there and at the age of 15 won a scholarship to the Lycée Faidherbe in the old city Saint-Louis where he distinguished himself in scientific subjects, but took a second baccalauréat in philosophy (1926). After a year's military service in France, Birago studied veterinary medicine at the University of Toulouse, earning a degree there in 1933. He then married a French woman and returned with her to Dakar, where he began his career as a mobile veterinarian. At the time of Senegal's independence in 1960, President Senghor named him Ambassador to Tunisia—a position he held with distinction for several years before returning to private life. He died in the city of his birth on November 25, 1989, at the age of 83, having acquired a status as one of the greatest—and many will persuasively argue *the* greatest— black African writers of this century.

The area of focus in which Diop gained global recognition is that of négritude—a literary and philosophical movement asserting black identity and cultural values. Having originated in the West Indies and West Africa in the early 1920s, the movement gained vigor in 1934 when African and West Indian students in France grouped themselves around three of their members who were to become leading exponents of négritude: Léopold Sédar Senghor, a Senegalese; Aimé Césaire, a native of Martinique; and Léon Damas, a Guyanese. Together, through a newspaper called *L'Etudiant noir (The Black Student)*, the three leaders began to address questions that had been preoccupying them. These included: the relationship between literary servility and broader social, racial, and cultural servitude; the validity of certain pillars of Western civilization, such as science, measure, reason, progress, and truth; the extent to which a cultural world created by one people, especially if an "Other" is excluded from it, can properly represent and express that Other; and, perhaps most important, the French political and philosophical doctrine of assimilation.

Central to the concept of assimilation was the view that a black could be "forgiven" his or her blackness providing he or she unyieldingly concealed it within or behind an impeccably Westernized cultural appearance; in short, if he or she denied or absented her or himself culturally. Affirming the importance of African values both individually and in terms of their potential contribution to world culture, the students took the position that a colonized intellectual who believed in the significance of his or her civilization and was committed to making the values of that civilization known was obliged to reject both the political domination of the colonizer and the culture of assimilation that defined and justified that domination.

During and after World War II, many students of the négritude movement returned to their respective countries to continue there what they had begun in Paris. By the 1950s, négritude had gained some influence outside the world of black intellectuals. However, despite its close parallels in certain areas of discourse to the then-emerging Western outlook called post-modernism, négritude was viewed by most established Western academics as exotic. This view, which was challenged by Jean Paul Sartre in

his now famous *Orphée noir (Black Orpheus)*,[2] was not unlike the earlier, initial outlook toward the inspiration Picasso found in African art. But the late fifties and sixties saw the flowering of négritude as its spirit spread throughout Africa and the West Indies, and the literature it sponsored gained worldwide recognition and acclaim.

Diop was one of the students who were peripherally grouped around *L'Etudiant noir* and the intellectual ferment associated with it. He may, however, have been influenced more by the Mortinican prose-writer René Maran, whose novel *Batouala: A True Black Novel* (1921) was claimed by Diop to be among the first to portray blacks as blacks rather than as they were artificially constructed by their cultural masters. Upon Diop's return to Senegal after earning his degree in veterinary medicine, his travels throughout Africa took him to the Sudan in 1937 where he became acquainted with the "griot" (storyteller) Amadou Koumba and began mentally storing away material for the narratives he would later write. In 1947 he published *Les Contes D'Amadou Koumba*[3] *(Tales of Amadou Koumba)* followed by, among others, *Nouveaux contes d'Amadou Koumba (New Tales of Amadou Koumba)* in 1958, *Leurres et Lueurs (Gleams and Glimmers)* in 1960, and *A Rebroussetemps (Retracing Steps in Time)* in 1982.

The area of focus in which Diop gained global recognition is that of negritude—a literary and philosophical movement asserting black identity and cultural values.

Les Contes D'Amadou Koumba had a stunning effect. Not only did the stories retold (from the original Wolof) in French show that French culture, as expressed through Diop, had never succeeded in imposing itself on his Africanness but that he had assimilated that culture. They did more. They demonstrated that Africa, far from bereft of culture, boasts a literature capable of winning a place for itself among the greatest literatures of the world. Recognition of the latter possibility was so out of keeping with the then-conventional thinking that some initially thought Diop had simply copied from "foreign folktales." The symbolism and underlying cosmology were so unmistakably African, however, that there could be no confusion with any other culture.[4]

Diop shared with other exponents of négritude a common outlook on certain issues, including: the originality of African culture and the necessity of promoting the African personality to take its merited place "in the future concert of nations"; the interdependence of all things and, hence, the incompleteness and potentially choking limitation of any single cultural experience (the attempt by the West to universalize its experience was strongly criticized); the importance of being sympathetic to or gaining identification with the Other, socially and naturally; and the underlying universalism of what it means to be human. There were also, however, many ways in which Diop differed from his fellow advocates. And of course there were many non-négritude writers with whom he shared some themes, yet differed in other ways.

Unlike many West Indians whose writings expressed nostalgia for an Africa unknown to them personally, or some Africans (including the even more famous Senghor) who lived most of their lives in Europe, Diop knew Africa intimately. As a practicing veterinarian, he had first-hand contact year after year (sometimes for months at a time) with traditional rural life. His training as a scientist prepared him to observe with exactness the patterns of this life, while his abilities as a poet-philosopher enabled him to convey the meanings of that life with refined power and elegance. Thus, one finds in his stories not only an immediate confrontation with quantum mechanics or Taoist physics, typical of the négritude tradition, in which location, dimension, measurement, consistency or even particle are hard to define, but a confessional intensity hardly found in other writers. And yet Diop did not preach, for he saw no need to undermine the virtues or emphasize the weaknesses of other cultures as a way of elevating Africa's. He believed that what he presented would speak for itself.

Also characteristic of Diop is that, whereas many of the négritude writers—including Jean-Joseph Rabearivelo (of Madagascar), U Tam'si (of Congo-Brazzaville), and Aimé Césaire—merged Western and African literary images and forms, he presented his work in forms and styles that were almost entirely African, dedicating his stories and poetry to the "ordinary" people of Africa. And while many writers worldwide who have sought to preserve and advance the values of a local way of life that is perceived to be threatened by an "alien culture" (the Russian Slavophils and Argentinian Jorge Luis Borges come to mind) have exhibited ambivalence toward that culture, one finds little of that ambivalence in Diop. His attitude is somewhat similar to that expressed in the apparent transcendental certainties of Césaire, whose images of the indignities and tortures visited on blacks under colonialism are coupled with counter-images of liberation (through revolution) preparatory to a sought universal reconciliation of human beings. Yet those images perhaps exhibited too much of an underlying nationalism for Diop.

The earlier claim that Diop's work is no less significant to the world than that of Beckett is one which many readers familiar with the works of both

writers may find puzzling, given the two men's differing backgrounds, literary forms, and philosophical focuses. Yet there is a profound similarity in their works: both men sought to use language to uncover the meaning of human experience and to counsel us about our possibilities. In Beckett (for instance in the fictional trilogy *Molloy, Malone Dies*, and *The Unnamable*, as well in *Waiting for Godot* and *Endfame*), one finds an almost exhaustive exploration of multiple aspects of the verbal medium, including his play on syllable as an absurdist dramatist and his experiments with the theatrical modes of monologue, dialogue, mime, and silence. In many of Diop's literary works (e.g., "Sarzan," "The Inheritance," "The Bone," and "The Judgment") it is the rhythms—repetitions, antitheses, couplets, refrains, assonances, alliterations, and narrative intervals—that rule. And while Beckett, in speaking of hollow persons, human confinement, a human spirit on its knees divorced from transcendental certainties and historical connection, and of the meaninglessness of existence, was, in the words of Ghalib, telling us that we are the sounds of our own breaking,[5] Diop conveys an equally important message: we are the source of our own mending.

In "The Inheritance" and other poems, Diop uses plural layers of meaning to indicate that language and its imaginative possibilities, like Percy Bysshe Shelley's Hope in "Prometheus Unbound," can be the source from which we create from our own wreck the very things for which we yearn: a voice from the silence that pervades us, a unity from threatened dissolution, and community from menacing alienation.

Earlier I mentioned the likeness between the writings of négritude advocates and quantum mechanics. This likeness is particularly apparent in Diop's fictional work where there is no single meaning or structure and where the "reality" of a narrative sequence resides not so much in the accustomed or "normal" succession of events or actions but in the dialectics of tension strung around and upon almost endless degrees of borders, distances, and connectedness. Even philosophers of language and logic who have questioned the referential discourse of logical formalism (transformational-generative grammarians, for example) have found the fictional discourse of traditional Africa, as presented by Diop, quite rebellious. Indeed, the fiction of a writer such as Diop is likely to be used in the future to test or question the explanatory power of certain logical models.

Despite their insistence on an Afro-centric focus, most négritude writers saw their work as a step in the direction of a later reintegration with a greater human culture. In the grand tradition of Gandhi or Giuseppi Mazzini, who, respectively, felt Indians and Italians could associate with the rest of humanity *as equals* only after they had established their own collective existence, Diop saw the cultural development of Africa as both the aim of political action and the means by which its people could regain their sense of self and both their place in and responsibility toward the common work of humanity. It is in his exquisite poetry that one can see his efforts to present both that which he sees as peculiarly African and that which is universal in African culture. His poem "Ball," which discusses jazz (a form of music that he maintains came from Africa) among other things, is self-explanatory:

> Stop Jazz, you scan the sobs and tears
> That jealous hearts keep only to themselves.
> Stop your scap-iron. Your uproar
> Seems a huge complaint where consent is
> born.[6]

In "Spirits" the reader finds not only the pulsating presence of human beings in the trees, the air, and the water, but much more, as well. For instance, many have accurately noted the simultaneously protective, guiding, and threatening presence of the dead in the poem. Others have detected in "Spirits" the *personal unconscious* which, as Freud concluded, is the dwelling place of forgotten and repressed contents; the *collective unconscious*, a Jungian psychic archetype common to all people; and a cosmic order (not unlike that defended by the Mexican poet Octavio Paz) of which humans and animals, plants, inanimate objects, and gods (or the God) are all a part.

> Those who are dead are not ever gone;
> They are in the darkness that grows lighter
> And in the darkness that grows darker.
> The dead are not down in the earth;
> They are in the trembling of trees
> In the groaning of the woods,
> In the water that runs,
> In the water that sleeps,
> They are in the hut, they are in the crowd:
> The dead are not dead.
>
> Listen to things
> More than beings,
> Hear the voice of fire,
> Hear the voice of water.
> Listen in the wind,
> To the bush that is sighing:
> This is the breathing of ancestors,
> Who have not gone away
> Who are not under the earth
> Who are not really dead.
>
> Those who are dead are not ever gone;
> They are in a woman's breast,
> In the wailing of a child,
> And the burning of a log,

In the moaning rock,
In the weeping grasses,
In the forest and the home.
The dead are not dead

Listen more often
To Things than to Beings,
Hear the voice of fire,
Hear the voice of water.
Listen in the wind to
The bush that is sobbing:
This is the ancestors breathing.

Each day they renew ancient bonds,
Ancient bonds that hold fast
Binding our lot to their law,
To the will of the spirits stronger than we
To the spell of our dead who are not really
dead,
Whose convenant binds us to life,
Whose authority binds to their will,
The will of the spirits that stir
In the bed of the river, on the banks of the river,
The breathing of spirits
Who moan in the rocks and weep in the
grasses . . .[7]

Finally, having no use for those who believe in the moral defectiveness of the powerful or the superior virtue of the oppressed, Diop presents African culture in all its glory and in all its failing. He did so not only because of his honesty, but also because he believed that life needs the service—not the memory—of history. That service, he felt, could not be properly given by the deformed perspectives created to serve established power: the "picture galleries of the past" designed to effect sensation and distraction, and elaborated "collections of effects" intended to justify desired ruin.[8] What is needed, he contended, is a history that ministers to the human need for rootedness and change, reverence and effectiveness, belonging and liberation. And, to those of us who fail to know and live that history, who do not feel and taste its anguished silences made by rumors, and who see nothing of what it has made or fail to trace its unbroken signs, Diop offers a warning in "Vanity" in the form of a question:

If we tell, gently, gently
All that we shall one day have to tell,
Who then will hear our voices without
laughter, . . .
Who indeed will hear them without laughter?[9]

Birage Diop, a Molière of the twentieth century, is not dead.

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[1]There is some disagreement about the birthdate of Diop. There is, for instance, one claim that he was born on December 12, 1906.

[2]Sartre, of course, thought négritude would disappear as a movement in the hoped-for general proletarian, social transformation. For his specific comments see Sartre, J.P. (1959). Orphée noir. *Présence Africaine*. Pp. 219-247.

[3]A small section of this was translated into English by Dorothy Blair for Oxford University Press in 1966 as *Tales of Amadou Koumba*.

[4]See an interesting study in English by Tollerson, M.S. (1984). *Mythology and Cosmology in the Narratives of Bernard Dadie & Birago Diop*. Washington, DC: Three Continent Press.

[5]See Ahmad, A. (Ed.). (1971). *Ghazals of Ghalib*. New York: Columbia University Press. P. 58. "I'm neither the loosening of song nor the close-drawn tent of music; I'm the sound, simply, of my own breaking." Trans. by Adrienne Rich.

[6]This is a translation by Gerald Moore and Ulli Beier, which has been modified by the author. See Moore, G. and Beier, U. (1966). *Modern Poetry from Africa*. Baltimore: Penguin Books.

[7]The title of this poem in French is "Souffles," which can be translated as "breaths" or "breathing." Diop called it "forefathers." It should be observed that in a number of his stories Diop repeatedly dealt with archetypes, especially rebirth, spirit, and trickster.

[8]Nietzsche, F.W. (1957). *The Use and Abuse of History*. Trans. by Adrian Collins. 2d rev. ed. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing.

[9]See his poem "Vanity," as translated by Moore and Beier. *Modern Poetry from Africa*.

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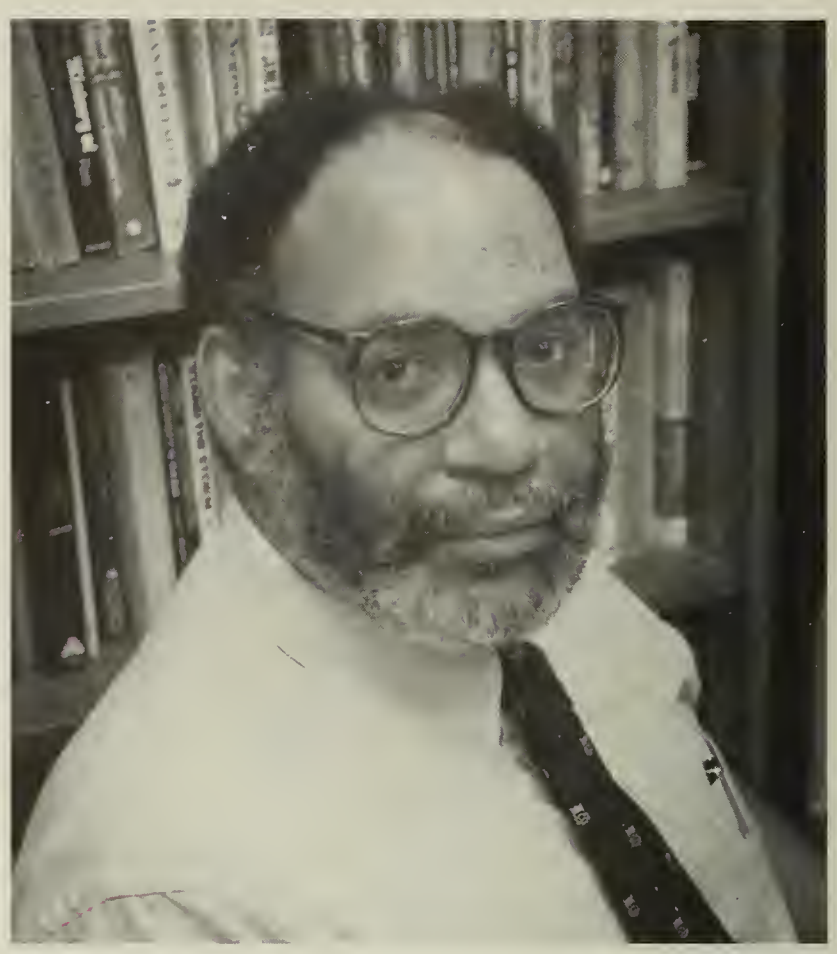
The Faculty of the Sixties: A Reappraisal

by
Monroe H. Little



Between 1967 and 1969 the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education initiated and substantially funded several national surveys of U.S. higher education. One such study of faculty employed a questionnaire that was mailed to approximately 100,000 full-time college and university faculty at 303 schools nationwide. The results of this survey, which solicited more than 300 items of information from each respondent and enjoyed an unusually high response rate of over 60%, contain a wealth of data on a variety of political and social issues that has rarely been subjected to careful analysis by scholars.

This is especially unfortunate in retrospect. The Carnegie survey of faculty was conducted during a period of tremendous political and social upheaval in the United States—much of which is often closely associated with the academic community. The 1960s were characterized in part by the verbal bashing of academics who were variously denounced as left-wing theoreticians, ivory-tower guideline writers, pointy-headed professors, and so on. In addition, accusations were made that college professors not only aided and abetted the wrongdoings of student activists, but also gave their unreserved support to school desegregation and other social engineering efforts by the federal government.[1] When results from the Carnegie survey are examined, however, a somewhat different picture of the faculty of the 1960s emerges.

When examined, these data can be interpreted as evidence that the predominantly white faculty of the 1960s was in basic agreement with established authority, both in and outside of the academy. They also show that on nearly all important issues, political or academic, this country's faculty was generally at loggerheads with African-American students, intellectuals, and civil rights leaders, and that the academic mind of the 1960s was neither progressive nor liberal in the sense that it was popularly assumed to be.

According to the Carnegie survey, the percentage of professors who were involved in or supported the student protests and demonstrations that rocked U.S. college and university campuses during the 1960s was very small. Less than one-half of one percent of faculty members helped plan, organize, or lead such activities, and only 0.7% actually joined students in protest. Just 5.8% openly supported student demonstrations, while 2.3% were openly opposed, and 4.2% tried to mediate.[2]

Nor did faculty participate to a great extent in other forms of politics. Of those polled, less than 5% described themselves as "very active" in political campaigns either before or after the 1968 Democratic and Republican national conventions, while no more than 16% reported being "fairly active." Interestingly, the largest percentage of academics, ranging from 43% to 49%, were not active politically at all.

With so few faculty willing to become active politically either on or off campus, it should come as no surprise that they were rather conventional in their attitude toward politics and political change. Just over 32% agreed, either wholly or in part, with the statement "Meaningful social changes cannot be achieved through traditional American politics." Nearly 73% were of the opinion that in the United States there was no justification for the use of violence to achieve political goals.

To a large degree, the academic men and women of the 1960s were fearful of disruption and violence. Only 24.2% approved of student demonstrators' aims *and* methods; while slightly more (26.2%) approved of demonstrators' aims, but not their methods. Interestingly, over 51% of those sampled were convinced that radical left-wing agitators were responsible for most campus demonstrations. An even larger majority (82.6%) believed that campus

disruptions by militant students were a threat to academic freedom; and 79.9% would have expelled or suspended students who disrupted the normal functioning of a college. They took this position despite the fact that between 70.2% and 81.9% of faculty reported that campus demonstrations had no effect whatsoever on either their teaching or relations with colleagues and students. Over 91% said that campus student protests had no effect on their research.

Though many of the faculty in the Carnegie study were opposed to disruption and violence in the United States, they were not nearly so squeamish about the violence and disruption in South Vietnam. Only 18.2% thought the United States should withdraw from Vietnam immediately; while approximately 40% supported a reduction of American involvement and the formation of a coalition government. The remaining 41% were willing to expend more American lives and dollars to prevent a Communist "take-over" in South Vietnam, as the questionnaire phrased it. The latent anticommunism of the academics polled becomes even more evident in the fact that only 19.1% of the respondents believed "some form of Communist regime is probably necessary for progress in underdeveloped countries."

It would appear then that sixties faculty were strong on law and order at home and weak on military restraint abroad. While not exactly Richard Nixon's soulmates (only 33.8% voted for him in 1968), they could easily be described as his kissing cousins. Except for 4.6% who were self-described radicals, 40.8% characterized themselves as liberals, 26.8% as "middle-of-the-roaders," 24.9% as moderately conservative, and 2.9% strongly conservative.

Faculty opinion on racial matters helps further clarify their leanings on social and political issues. For instance, one year after the *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* concluded that white society was "deeply implicated" in creating, maintaining, and condoning the ghetto, less than one half (46.1%) of the academic men and women polled believed that racism was the main cause of riots in the nation's cities.[3] At the same time, more than 61% opposed busing to achieve racial balance in public elementary schools. On only one issue was their supposed political and social progressivism on the subject of race relations apparent: 64.6% supported African-American control of their own schools where de facto segregation existed.

The middle 1960s is usually thought of as the beginning of an egalitarian period in U.S. higher education during which, increasingly, the American public "assumed that everyone should have a chance at a college education."[4] Whether this equality was actually achieved will not be debated here; however, judging from the Carnegie data, it appears that faculty were at best ambivalent about the issue of equal student access to the nation's colleges and universities. For instance, while over 70% believed a college education should be available to every high school graduate who wanted one, it does not appear that many members of our nation's faculty gave much thought about where these additional students would receive a college education. When asked about undergraduate admissions at their own institution, 55.2% felt they should be "left as they are." More faculty preferred to increase the number of graduate students in their own department, but most were satisfied with current graduate enrollments.

When examined, [the Carnegie survey] data can be interpreted as evidence that the predominantly white faculty of the 1960s was in basic agreement with established authority, both in and outside of the academy.

Equally revealing are faculty attitudes toward minority admissions and faculty appointments. At the time of the Carnegie survey, African-Americans accounted for only 6.6% of total college enrollment. The situation for African-American faculty was even worse: they totaled a mere 2.2% of the nation's professoriate—a figure that included the faculty of historically black colleges.[5] Despite the situation these figures illustrate, only 37.6% of faculty sampled by the Carnegie Commission agreed with the statement "American colleges are racist whether they mean to be or not." At the same time, a majority (61%) opposed relaxing normal academic standards at their own college or university to admit more minority undergraduates. More demonstratively, 78.6% disapproved of any attempt to relax normal academic requirements to appoint members of minority groups to the faculty of their respective institutions.

Faculty of the 1960s were overall not only quite traditional in their attitudes toward student admissions and faculty appointments, but also about curriculum. For instance, over 56% believed that undergraduate education would be improved if more emphasis was placed on broad liberal education. Approximately 60% ranked providing students with a broad liberal education as their number one personal priority, while 55.1% listed this as the most important function of their respective institutions. By contrast, vocational concerns almost always placed a poor second. An even larger majority (75.9%) believed that their respective schools "should be as concerned about students' personal values as it is with their intellectual development." Thus, the criticism by William Bennett and Allan Bloom that 1960s faculty lacked a clear sense of the importance

of the liberal arts and moral standards was unfounded.[6]

Faculty concern about liberal education or students' values did not extend to black studies, however. Over 67% either wholly or partially favored establishing black studies programs, but *only* if a college or university had a substantial number of African-American students who wanted such courses. To the academic men and women of the 1960s black studies was clearly for African-Americans only. At the same time, less than 25% of those surveyed believed that such programs should be controlled and administered by African-Americans.

Although 82.5% of 1960s faculty believed that academics should be free to present in class any ideas they considered relevant, they regarded it as a privilege belonging to them alone. While 68.9% believed that most undergraduates were mature enough to be given more responsibility for their own education, only about 20% thought that all courses should be elective, and approximately 33% believed grades should be abolished. Almost 6% thought undergraduates should have control or voting power in the hiring and promotion of faculty; 14.6% thought students should have power in selecting curriculum content; and 13.1% thought they should have a hand in setting degree requirements. These statistics suggest that academics of the 1960s did not define academic freedom as students' freedom to choose who would teach them or what they would learn.

The Carnegie survey . . . raises serious doubts about the extent of support among academics for the civil rights gains of African-Americans. . . . On almost every key civil rights issue, they were at odds with the African-American community.

Turning to academia's own realm, the faculty of the 1960s was also complacent on most academic issues. For the serious scholar, it is a delight to note the consistency between professors' own sense of success and their sense of college students' satisfaction with their education. Much smug self-congratulation lurks in these statistics. Among faculty sampled, 93.8% saw themselves as either very or fairly successful; 72.7% believed that undergraduates at their respective schools were basically satisfied with the education they were getting; and 71.9% thought that graduate education in their own subject was doing a good job of training students. Only 28.3% believed that graduate students could no longer find meaning in science and scholarship and that the best graduate students dropped out because they did not want to play the games of academic life (36.8%). Over three-quarters of faculty were convinced that graduate students did best if their undergraduate major was in the same general field. Approximately 62% maintained that their colleagues were strongly interested in the academic problems of undergraduates.

All in all, the predominantly white faculty of the 1960s was not in a very combative or inquisitive mood. Although 69.6% considered themselves intellectuals, their definition of intellectuals had nothing to do with the aggressive inquisitiveness that Voltaire, W.E.B. Du Bois, or E. Franklin Frazier took to be the essential feature of intellect. The faculty of the 1960s not only displayed an abysmal ignorance about some of the great social and political issues of their day, but were also cautious—and at times even reactionary—in their response to them. They did not insist, like Diderot, that *everything* be examined—without exception or circumspection. If the university of the 1960s was little more than a highly refined, all-purpose brothel, as its critics have charged, faculty were willing members of the world's oldest profession.

The Carnegie survey also raises serious doubts about the extent of support among academics for the civil rights gains of African-Americans. It appears that whatever support existed among faculty for the extension of democracy in the United States, it was not very widespread nor solidly based. On almost every key civil rights issue, they were at odds with the African-American community. Although faculty might have favored the civil rights gains of African-Americans in the abstract, they were unwilling to support the use of specific policies such as court-ordered school busing or other vigorous government efforts to eradicate racial inequality. Many faculty, like most whites, were unprepared to share the rights and privileges of citizenship with African-Americans that such policies implied; to do so would have destroyed the distinctiveness of their position.

Overall, the picture one gets of faculty from the 1969 Carnegie survey is that of an organization of men and women who lived and worked in a benumbing society without living or working in protest and in tension with its moral or cultural insensibilities. They used the liberal label and rhetoric to disguise their conservative default. They were pint-sized pundits who had lost touch with the essential mean-

Overall, the picture one gets of faculty from the 1969 Carnegie survey is that of an organization of men and women who lived and worked in a benumbing society without living or working in protest and in tension with its moral or cultural insensibilities.

ing of both democracy and intellect and who were equally guilty of an academic delinquency that transcended the comprehension of both. Theirs was a life that, in the final analysis, may have been personally satisfying, but was not, alas, socially ennobling.

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Book Review Essay

Brazilian Race Relations in Hemispheric Perspective

by
Rhett S. Jones

The Abolition of Slavery and the Aftermath of Emancipation in Brazil, by Rebecca J. Scott et al. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1988.

Luso-Brazilian Review, Volume 25, 1988. Guest Editor, Stuart B. Schwartz.

Race, Class, and Power in Brazil, Pierre-Michel Fontaine (Ed.). Los Angeles: Center for Afro-American Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, 1985.

The late Oliver C. Cox, one of the most insightful black Americans from the leftist tradition, was not often fooled. In his classic 1948 work, *Caste, Class, and Race*,[1] Cox, a long-time professor of sociology at Lincoln University in Missouri, revealed the nonsensical underpinnings of what then passed for the serious study of comparative race relations among sociologists in the United States. So successful was Cox that his book was thoroughly and deeply buried by the sociological establishment. When Pierre L. van den Berghe published *Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective*[2] in 1967, sociologists hailed his work as the first of its kind, thereby demonstrating that they had forgotten Cox's work, or at least managed to convince themselves that they had forgotten it.

But, while Cox was not taken in by the pretensions of white sociologists (whether born in the United States or imported from Sweden by white sociologists born in the United States) or by the black elites in such varied places as Liberia and Haiti, he *was* fooled by the Brazilians. He wrote of the "Portuguese's remarkable freedom from race prejudice in Brazil."[3] In reality, of course, neither the Portuguese nor their Brazilian descendants were free from race prejudice. But Cox was not the only Afro-American to conclude that Brazilian society was free of racism. Such astute North American black observers as E. Franklin Frazier and Robert S. Abbott were also taken in.

I ought to say at this point that my approach to this review essay is the same as that of Cox, Frazier, and Abbott in that I do not read Portuguese and my interest in Brazil is that of a black North American concerned with the comparative study of race in this hemisphere. I have been fortunate in team-teaching courses at Brown University with two distinguished scholars on race who are from Brazil: Anani Dzidzienyo, chair of the Afro-American Studies Program and associate professor of Portuguese-Brazilian studies and Afro-American studies; and Thomas Skidmore, chair of the Latin American Studies Program and professor of history. In talking with them and through eavesdropping on their dialogues with our students I have gleaned many insights into Brazilian race relations. While Dzidzienyo is black and Skidmore is white, each takes a no-nonsense approach to race in Brazil and each has a great love of that sprawling nation and its racially diverse peoples. Each is remarkably tolerant of a scholar such as myself who views the study of race in Brazil not as an end in itself, but as grist for his comparative history mill.

Rebecca J. Scott's opening article in *The Abolition of Slavery* is entitled "Exploring the Meaning of Freedom: Postemancipation Societies in Comparative Perspective." In it she explores the meaning of freedom for the emancipated slave and while conceding that "freedom" is a difficult term to define—particularly in a cross-cultural sense—offers some useful ideas as to how scholars might come to grips with it. Some of these ideas, she writes, "can begin to provide detailed portraits of economic and social options and constraints faced by former slaves, and thus illuminate the patterns of their individual and collective behavior. At the same time, we will need to listen for the faint echoes of the voices of the participants themselves." (p. 21)

In his essay on the abolition of slavery in Brazil, as compared to other places in the Americas, Seymour Drescher—whose 1987 book *Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective*[4] continues to provoke debate—concludes that Brazilian slaveholders were not able "to rally the country around the principle of slavery," and in this they differed from their counterparts in North America. (p. 51) George Reid Andrews begins his essay on the working class in São Paulo between 1888 (the year of the abolition of slavery in Brazil) and 1928 with the observation: "One hundred years after abolition, Brazil remains a country of marked racial inequality." (p. 85) Andrews then goes on to explore the role of both the labor movement and those who would be termed "white ethnics" in the United States in Brazil's continuing racism. For those familiar with relationships between ethnic groups who arrived in the United States during the twentieth century and black Americans, Reid's essay offers much food for comparative thought.

Stuart B. Schwartz, guest editor of the summer 1988 issue of the *Luso-Brazilian Review* devoted to Brazilian slavery and race relations, not only provides a useful introductory essay and bibliography in an article entitled "Recent Trends in the Study of Slavery in Brazil," but reminds readers of how difficult comparative history can be. He notes that there are far more documents on Brazilian slavery available than scholars have long assumed. In this sense slave scholarship there resembles slave scholarship in the United States two decades ago when some of our nation's most distinguished historians proclaimed there could be no Afro-American history because blacks left no written records. Brazil, however, is different in one important respect. Schwartz writes, "Unlike the situation in the United States where vast numbers of slave narratives exist and where government-sponsored collections of slave testimony were gathered and have subsequently been analyzed, slave and former slave writings or depositions are rare in Brazil." (p. 12)

But if students of comparative history are gradually becoming convinced that Brazil was not necessarily better than the United States in its treatment of black people, many black Americans have believed and continue to believe differently. The essay by David J. Hellwig, "A New Frontier in a Racial Paradise: Robert S. Abbott's Brazilian Dream," and Teresa Meade's and Gregory Alonso Pirio's "In Search of the Afro-American 'Eldorado': Attempts by North American Blacks to Enter Brazil in the 1920s," both demonstrate the attraction of Brazil to many black North Americans. According to Hellwig, Abbott, the long-time editor of the *Chicago Defender*, believed that Brazil "was indeed a racial paradise or utopia" even after a journey there in 1923. (p. 61) However, black citizens of the United States who shared Abbott's vision found that things were quite different when they sought to emigrate to Brazil. "It is in fact one of the great ironies of history," write Meade and Pirio, "that a number of black North Americans sought to migrate to Brazil because they had heard it was a land of opportunity for members of the black race, only to be prevented from entering by Brazilian authorities enforcing a whites-only migration law." (p. 85)

[Current] slave scholarship [in Brazil] resembles slave scholarship in the United States two decades ago when some of our nation's most distinguished scholars proclaimed there could be no Afro-American history because blacks left no written records.

The edge in such observations is sharper in *Race, Class, and Power* which, like the other two collections of essays reviewed here, is scholarly. It would not quite be correct to suggest that these essays are angry, but it might be legitimate to suggest that they collectively take exception to the idea that Brazil was or is a racial paradise. In his short, introductory essay, Pierre-Michel Fontaine provides a useful bibliography and sketches out varied approaches to the study of race relations in Brazil. He also places the work of contributors to the volume in context and concludes by observing that what is needed is "an understanding of the meaning of race in Brazilian society, and its relation to class and power." (p. 8)

Skidmore's article, "Race and Class in Brazil: Historical Perspectives," is not especially kind to the disciplines of history, sociology, or anthropology, and pointedly reminds readers that there is more to understanding ideas about race in this hemisphere than scholarly exchanges in the groves of academy. He notes, for instance, that the military regime in

Brazil branded as "subversive" not only "kidnapers with guns, but also social scientists with ideas." Such a policy, he continues, was bound to include academics who had raised questions about Brazil's 'racial democracy.'" (p. 16) Skidmore also warns against carrying historical comparisons too far, fearing they may obscure rather than provide insight into the workings of black-white relations in Brazil. (p. 20)

Anani Dzidzienyo's "The African Connection and the Afro-Brazilian Condition" is the closing essay in *Race, Class, and Power* and appropriately traces the evolution of changing attitudes about race in Brazil and in African states. As Africans have become more knowledgeable about Brazil, he argues, they have become more skeptical of the nation's racial democracy and of its claims to a leadership role in the Third World based on the supposed lack of Brazilian racism. A fiasco took place, he writes, in "the meeting between members of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs and Brazilians in São Paulo in August 1980, where the Nigerian delegation expressed surprise at the initial absence of Afro-Brazilians." (p. 146) Dzidzienyo's article effectively and convincingly demonstrates that while the patterns of race relations have been different in the United States and in Brazil, both countries have been and are racist.

The assumption that Brazilian slavery and race relations were less harsh than those of the United States has been a staple of American scholarship for nearly a century. Sir Harry Johnston, who wrote *Pioneers in Tropical Africa*,[5] may have had the first word on the subject when he noted that the Portuguese were less cruel in their treatment of blacks than were the English. Two works published a generation later have also had a profound and lasting impact on the image of Brazil among North American historians and social scientists. Both appeared in 1946. Gilberto Freyre's *The Masters and the Slaves*[6] was a translation of the Brazilian social scientist's massive work which argued that the Portuguese in Brazil drew no firm line between the races in part because of the attraction of Portuguese men to African women. Freyre went on to suggest that black women were often influential and powerful figures in the lives of the white men who ruled Brazil, serving them as mammies, concubines, and shrewd advisers. Frank Tannenbaum's *Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas*[7] argued that the Portuguese (and the Spaniards) tended to treat their New World slaves better than the English both because they were long-accustomed to Africans and harbored no special racial prejudice against them, and because the Roman Catholic Church—unlike its Protestant counterparts in North America—insisted that Africans were human beings and protected them.

Such scholars as Stanley Elkins[8]; Herbert Klein[9]; and Magnus Mörner[10] were significantly influenced by the Tannenbaum argument though they did not accept it wholeheartedly and sought to refine, correct, and expand upon it. Brazil thereafter figured

It would not quite be correct to suggest that [the essays in Race, Class, and Power*] are angry, but it might be legitimate to suggest that they collectively take exception to the idea that Brazil was or is a racial paradise.*

importantly in all debates on the treatment of slaves and freedpersons of African descent in the Americas. In his attempts to place the treatment of slaves in the northern part of what is now the United States in perspective, Edgar J. McManus referred frequently to slavery and race relations in Brazil.[11] Three informative anthologies—Laura Foner's and Eugene D. Genovese's (Eds.) *Slavery in the New World: A Reader in Comparative History*[12]; David W. Cohen's and Jack P. Greene's (Eds.) *Neither Slave nor Free: The Freedmen of African Descent in the Slave Societies of the New World*[13]; and Robin Winks' (Ed.) *Slavery: A Comparative Perspective*[14] —devoted considerable attention to Brazil.

Roger Bastide's *African Civilizations in the New World*[15] notes that the experience of African men and women in Brazil was quite different than that of their brothers and sisters in British North America. Harmanus Höetink, in two well-received works[16], suggested that Tannenbaum may have been right in concluding that some blacks were relatively well-treated, but that the Portuguese were no less racial bigots than the English. Utilizing the concept of the "somatic norm image," Höetink argued that because the Portuguese had a conception of themselves that was darker than the image of themselves held by Englishmen, Brazilian society was more open to mulattos and other mixed bloods than was that of British North America. In *Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States*,[17] Carl Degler took this argument a bit further suggesting that a "mulatto escape hatch" existed, which enabled those persons of African ancestory who were light-skinned and possessed European facial features to rise in Brazilian society, while those who appeared African could not.

There has always been a strong counter-argument to the Tannenbaum thesis. In a number of books, historian Charles R. Boxer[18] demonstrated that racism was every bit as common in the Portuguese empire as in that of their rivals: the English, the Dutch, and the French. Leslie B. Rout's *The African Experience in Spanish America*[19] argued that, contrary to Tannebaum, the Spaniards (and by implication the

Portuguese) had been racist in their treatment of Africans in Africa and in Europe, and just as racist in the Americas.

Three recent historical studies of Brazil (Viotti da Costa, *Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories*[20]; Mattoso, *To Be a Slave in Brazil, 1550-1888*[21]; and Diffie, *A History of Colonial Brazil, 1500-1791*[22]) remind the North American reader that the history of Brazil—as colony, as empire, and as republic—is far older than that of the United States and the 13 British colonies that preceded it. Simple generalizations about the meaning of slavery and race in Brazil contort its long and complex history. In writing on Latin American slave societies, Herbert S. Klein observes that while virtually all people accepted the essential humanity of black folk:

> [A]t the same time, these were inevitably racist societies which rejected black self-identity and self-worth and often created a second-class citizenship for those who achieved their freedom. Social ascension and mobility were possible for enough blacks to give a majority a sense of hope, but the terms were always rejection of their Afro-American cultural identity and their blackness. In such a situation it was inevitable that the cultures which were established by the slaves in America would serve two often conflicting purposes: that of integrating the slaves into the larger master-dominated societies while providing them with identity and meaning that protected them from that society's oppression and hostility.[23]

White citizens of the United States are still grappling with the issue of whether or not African-Americans are human beings. In that sense Oliver Cox may have been correct in perceiving a difference between Brazil and the United States. But much of the remainder of Klein's observation would appear to hold for Brazil, the United States, and the rest of the hemisphere.

To get ahead, to rise in a white-dominated system, and to achieve status blacks have had to turn their back on Africanity and its many manifestations in the New World. The essays in these three anthologies on Brazil provide insightful perspectives on the various ways in which they have come to grips with their blackness and racism.

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Elijah Anderson's work on marginally employed or unemployed black men in Chicago suggests a slightly different interpretation. According to Anderson, there are special hangouts in the cities that serve as gathering places for the urban poor and working-class people who seek a sense of self-worth and status through their sociability and interaction with peers. Urban taverns and bars, barbershops, carryouts, and their adjacent street corners and alleys are examples of the places that serve similar functions for the poor as more formal social clubs or domestic circles do for the middle and upper classes.[12]

Those who frequent these places create their own local, informal, social stratification system. Status within this system is action-oriented and precarious, based in large measure upon what people think and say and do about other members of the group. Extended primary groups develop in these places. Among the groups studied by Anderson the primary values were a "visible means of support" and "decency."[13] Residual values or values group members adopt after the "props" supporting decency have been judged to be unattainable or unavailable are "toughness," "gettin' big money," "gettin' some wine," and "having some fun."

> Some writers have attempted to explain "low-class" values as weak imitations or approximations of the wider society's values. Rodman (1963), for example, has suggested that low-income people are unable to meet the larger society's standards of social conduct and therefore must stretch their own values to adjust to their particular life circumstances. Although there may be a certain amount of truth to this view, and it is supported by my own analysis, I believe it does not go far enough in appreciating the lives of the people involved and the internal coherence and integrity of their local stratification systems. The people I studied . . . appear not so much to "stretch" a given set of values to meet some general standard as to *create their own particular standards of social conduct* [emphasis added] along variant lines open to them.[14]

While this brief attempt to categorize black value orientations does not cover the entire spectrum of attitudes and values to be found among African-Americans, what is clear is that racial domination and the subordinate position of black Americans in society do influence the values espoused by black people as well as white people. The duality of values held are reminiscent of the concept of "twoness" employed by W.E.B. Du Bois in his 1903 book, *The Souls of Black Folk.*[15] Interestingly, the reality of black peoples' lives, even for those who are classified as socially integrated, is one in which individuals and families exist in two different worlds, two different cultures, between which they must negotiate their existence.

Scientific Racism

There are in the dominant culture a number of mechanisms that reinforce and support white domination. These include ideologies of white supremacy. The most blatant contemporary ideological rationale for white domination is scientific racism. Scientific racism is rooted in the idea that domination is a right of the biologically superior. Scientific racism has produced "evidence" sustaining the belief that black people are inherently inferior, thus, rationalizing white rule.

The proponents of scientific racism advance arguments like those advocated by Social Darwinists earlier in this century. They argue for an educational system that will train the intellectually inferior for specific positions in the labor force. Also, again like the Social Darwinists, advocates of scientific racism view intelligence and achievement as products of innate genetic or cultural endowment. The logic of this has significant and potentially dangerous implications for social policy. If intelligence, achievement, mobility, and success are the products of inherent biological or cultural differences that cannot be altered by environment, then it is folly to try to alter social structures or institutional practices to promote equality or equal opportunity. Scientific racism goes further than Social Darwinism in not only blaming the victim but also in providing a quantitative and quasi-scientific basis for perpetuating inequality and domination.

Traits presumed to be biologically determined become the basis for social policy. This substantially limits the opportunities for targeted groups and makes them the victims of exclusion, sometimes even of extermination. In this century, Nazi Germany is associated with the most developed and horrifying application of social policy based on ideas of scientific racism. Here in the United States, prominent writers and scholars have contributed to the development of this phenomena, especially during the 1920s and 1930s. From the turn of the century through the 1930s scientific racism gained popularity in the United States in scholarly and popular literature. The enactment of the 1924 restrictive immigration bill may have been the highwater mark of the influence of these ideas during that period.

From the 1930s until the 1960s scientific racism was dormant. Now, however, the arguments have been resurrected in new forms. Gone are the archaic notions of phrenology and craniology that assumed that human worth and behavior could be determined by body type. Contemporary theorists seek instead to prove the primacy of heredity over envi-

ronment in the determination of intelligence. The language is new, but the message is the same: genetic endowment is the great divider between superior and inferior types. Such differences cannot be mediated through legislation or social policy. Hence, racial differences are an immutable fact that are ordained genetically.

Scientific racism has functioned as an influence on public action. Such perceptions of human differences are a convenient *raison d'etre* for a stratified society. Some of the earliest theorists of the ideology of scientific racism were social scientists.[16] Preoccupied with social order and progress, they framed questions of individual and social difference as political questions. Their ideas, like all pseudo-scientific ideas regarding the human species, found acceptance among those seeking to justify the subordination of others. In periods of major social change such ideas tend to intensify as status positions are challenged. The 1960s was such a period.

The *Brown* decision (1954) altered the legal status of African-Americans and proved to be a catalyst for the modern civil rights movement. The court's ruling also struck at the core of the ideology of scientific racism. The philosophy of separate but equal had existed under the assumption of biological differences. Thus the ideology of scientific racism had given support to those who sought to maintain entitlement and privilege.

Scientific racism sees entitlement as a just reward to those who are genetically superior. Conversely, genetic inferiority is seen as the basis for restricting entitlement and privilege. Because of the presumptions about the association between race and superiority and inferiority, race becomes the key variable in restricting or granting entitlement. Members of the white race, designated by the ideology as biologically superior, are thus entitled to a superordinate status and the social, economic, and political privileges that are accorded this status. Members of the black race, designated by the ideology as biologically inferior, are denied any entitlement and privileges and are relegated to a subordinate status.

The *Brown* decision was a critical turning point not only in education but in the larger society because it set the stage for major alterations in the system of entitlement. The court's decision not only called into question the denial of choice in education, but also suggested a tolerance for a realignment in the historic patterns of power. The sociopolitical movements of the 1950s and 1960s vigorously sought such a realignment in the patterns of power relations, challenging the entitlements and privileges historically bestowed on white Americans.

The reemergence of the ideology of scientific racism during the past two decades has taken the form of an attack on the mental capacity of black children—and, by implication, all black people—by means of a dubious and abusive interpretation of intelligence testing. Arthur Jensen at the University of California at Berkeley, William Shockley of Stanford, and Richard Herrnstein of Harvard were in the forefront of a debate over the education of black children, the use of intervention strategies, and the development of public policy options to limit population growth among "genetically inferior blacks." All of these concepts were based on presumptions that intelligence was 80% inherited and 20% environment. Thus, policies that tried to use public funds or initiatives to improve the education and performance of black children were deemed to be undemocratic because they granted the disadvantaged some unearned privilege.

Scientific racism is an attempt to make inferiority a matter of science rather than prejudice.

The proponents of scientific racism ignored evidence of historical, social, and structural influences on intelligence testing and ignored the decline in SAT scores among white students as well. The emphasis on quantitative data, performed in an advocacy manner, was an attempt to give the resurfaced ideology of white supremacy an aura of scientific objectivity and respectability. The appeal to the inheritability of intelligence restates the same argument that social classes are products of differential genetic stock. Scientific racism is an attempt to make inferiority a matter of science rather than prejudice.

W.E.B. Du Bois identified science and empire as the preeminent values in Western societies at the turn of the century.[17] It should come as little surprise, then, that science during this century has been enlisted to justify political domination. The ideology of scientific racism has been invoked, in its least harmful form, as a rationalization for the insulation of privilege, the restraint of mobility, and the limitation of entitlement. In its most virulent form, scientific racism is a prescription for genocide.

The history of scientific racism is indicative of how data that purports to be "objective" may be used to promote reprehensible policy. Scientific racism has justified the deaths of countless millions of people by validating the claim that they were inferior and undeserving. A version of this ideology is being used today to justify the continuation of white domination and privilege.

Racial Violence

In a racially stratified society, racial violence is used as a method of social control to maintain the structures of subordination. In a conspicuously violent society so stratified, violence is used for politi-

cal purposes to maintain a racially bifurcated system, controlled politically by whites.

Historically, patterns of racial violence in the United States have moved in cycles of latent and aggressive activity. Latent periods have been relatively benign. During these periods the superordinate-subordinate system of race relations has been characterized by a kind of white paternalism. Aggressive periods have ensued when the system of domination has been challenged and/or the benefits of white superordination have been perceived to be eroding. During these periods, aggression and violence have been used to terrorize black people; the foundations of racial progress built by blacks have become targets for attack. The ebb and flow of racial violence has followed shifts in the national political economy and changing patterns in the labor force and the labor markets.

All institutions in American society have been permeated by the stratified and segmented nature of race relations. Racially motivated violence is a legacy of these unequal race relations, and it is endemic to the national political culture. Although manifest throughout American history, racial violence has differed in form and significance, breadth, and intensity from period to period.

This racially segmented social structure, established and maintained by violence, generates both systematic oppression of nonwhite racial groups, especially African-Americans, and systematic privileges for whites. The system of white privilege provides the philosophical and material basis for racism among whites. These privileges are the "white rights" that those who perpetuate racial violence are dedicated to defending.

Economically, black people were subjugated in such a way as to ensure their economic exploitation. African-Americans had no significant influence or control over economic production and commerce; indeed, their lives and their labor were "owned" by slaveowners and later by industrialists.

The flipside of this system of racial oppression is the system of social, economic, and political privilege for white Americans. White supremacy and racial oppression have been major factors in the political and economic development of this nation. The function of racial violence has been to establish and to perpetuate this system of differential privilege and deprivation based on race. Racial violence is a deliberate activity that reinforces ideologies of racial supremacy and intimidates the victims of violence and racial oppression.

Racial violence is currently on the upturn, a reaction to two important social dynamics: (1) the dramatic changes brought about by progress in civil rights; and (2) the dramatic transformations in the infrastructure of national economic life that since the Great Depression have generated unprecedented levels of unemployment, poverty, homelessness, and social dislocation. Currently, large segments of the American population are experiencing a heightened sense of insecurity and vulnerability.

During the past decade several research centers have collected information on racially-motivated violence.[18] A study of the data reveals an upsurge of racism and racist violence, with the most deadly attacks coming against the African-American community. There has been an increase in the number of incidents of white mobs attacking blacks in segregated residential areas. There has also been a steady increase in the fire-bombing of homes purchased by black families in predominantly white neighborhoods. A study of violence in residential neighborhoods conducted by the Southern Poverty Law Center indicates that between 1985 and 1986 there were at least 45 cases of vigilante activity directed at black families who were moving into predominantly white communities. In the last five years incidents of racial harassment or violence have been reported on over 300 college campuses.[19]

The events in Howard Beach that led to the death of Michael Griffith in 1986 and the killing of Yusef Hawkins in Bensonhurst in 1989 reflect a longstanding problem of racist violence in white communities in New York City. Racially motivated assaults had increased to at least one a week in 1987. The Chicago Police Department reported a 58% increase in racial attacks for the first six months of 1986 over the same period in 1985. The New York City Police Department reported an increase in racially-motivated violence over the last eight years. These attacks go mostly unreported in the news media.

The Community Relations Service of the Justice Department and the Center for Democratic Renewal provide data that demonstrate a sharp upturn nationally in violent racial attacks. The increase was 42% between 1985 and 1986, fueled largely by the boldness of white terrorist groups in the United States. Nationally, the Community Relations Services of the Justice Department reports an increase in all cases of racial confrontations from 953 in 1977 to 1,996 in 1982. The Justice Department also reported a 46% increase in cases of racial violence involving the Ku Klux Klan between 1978 and 1979, and a startling 550% increase in the period 1978 to 1980.

Racial Change Since the 1960s

As a result of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the decade of the 1960s was a time of significant change in race relations in the United States. Consequently, it is a good reference point from which to begin an examination of trends and developments in the status of African-

Americans. However, because racial change has been uneven, it is not possible to concisely summarize its direction over the past two decades.

The greatest changes have taken place in the political sphere. Black mayors are leading—or have led—all of the largest cities in the United States; and they preside over many medium-size cities as well. Although this has often entailed administering central cities burdened with well-nigh unsolvable problems within the context of a dominant white power structure, the new black political influence has also, on the plus side, democratized access to municipal and public service jobs.

The rise in black elected officials has been spectacular: the number increased from 280 in 1965 to 6,681 by 1987.[20] Yet the fact that that figure represents less than 1.5% of all political officeholders shows that the degree of underrepresentation remains as significant as the gains.[21]

Discrimination in jobs and training programs has definitely lessened over the past two decades. Yet racially exclusive practices still exist. Many small-sized firms (the fastest growing segment of the economy) exclude blacks and other minorities. And while affirmative action regulations constrain larger companies from such direct discrimination, ways are still found to insure predominantly white work forces—for example, by avoiding areas of large black populations in the location of plants.

These economic developments have had adverse effects on the integrity and unity of the black community. The nuclear family has been weakened by joblessness and by the single-parent trend. The extended family is no longer strong enough to fill the gap as successfully as it did in the past. Drugs and crime also divide the community, creating a climate of fear and distrust. Even in street life there is less solidarity than in the past. The increasing distance between the classes makes it harder for the community to act with a unified voice. And integration, with all its positive features, has also weakened the traditional institutions of the black community: black businesses, black colleges, and even the black church.

Some observers have lamented what they call the "loss of African-American community." Some of this loss can be attributed to the economic bifurcation of the community and the resulting loss of community infrastructure. In addition, there has been a significant loss of black principals, vice-principals, guidance counselors, teachers, and coaches as a result of school desegregation. Usually, desegregation has meant that blacks have moved into white-dominated institutions, and the schools they left have been reassigned to other purposes or closed. Seldom has it meant that whites integrated into institutions that have been traditionally black and where blacks hold some of the power and influence.

Conclusion

Significant changes have occurred in the racial landscape of America during the past 30 years. However, the basic structural position of African-Americans is the same. Prospects for improving this situation may be significantly affected by impressions held by white Americans about the status of black Americans. Most whites believe that blacks are approaching parity in areas like housing, health care, employment, education, and treatment by the criminal justice system—a perception markedly different from that of most blacks.

In a NAACP Legal Defense Fund study, more than two-thirds of blacks, as compared with one-third of whites, felt that blacks had fewer employment opportunities than whites of similar income and education.[22] In answer to the question of whether blacks received equal pay for equal work, whites responded yes more than twice as often as blacks. Two-thirds of blacks felt that blacks had poorer housing and less access to housing, while only 41% of whites felt that way; twice as many whites as blacks thought that blacks were treated as well as whites by the criminal justice system. As the NAACP Legal Defense Fund study concluded, these gaps in perception—and between perception and reality—need to be addressed by the nation's leaders. These opposing views regarding the parity of blacks and whites in society present a significant impediment to racial progress.

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Sports Notes

by
Wornie L. Reed

The big-business nature of college sports is becoming increasingly apparent. Each of the four schools with basketball teams in the 1990 "Final Four" received $1,430,000, while the 64 invited teams were guaranteed at least $286,000 each. On top of this, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) recently signed a $1 billion basketball deal with CBS television, ensuring that the take for individual schools will be greater in the future.

College athletes are producing this revenue without remuneration other than their scholarships, which pale in comparison to the revenue they generate. The North Carolina State situation is an interesting example. The recently released coach of that school's basketball team is reported to have been receiving around $200,000 per year to endorse a brand of sneakers that his players wore. Yet when the players, who got none of the endorsement money, sold sneakers given to them it was considered a serious scandal.

Perhaps what is most tragic is that these players generate the revenue, yet frequently leave school four years later without a degree. North Carolina State University graduates very few of its basketball players—a situation that should get much more publicity as a result of Senator Bill Bradley's bill that would require colleges to publish the graduation rates of their scholarship athletes.

The recent action by the University of Notre Dame is further evidence of the big-business nature of college sports. Notre Dame abandoned the College Football Association's (CFA) television plan and signed its own $40 million contract with NBC. The CFA is a group of 63 schools, including many of the football powerhouses, that bolted the NCAA's television supervision in the early 1980s so that they could appear on television more often and avoid sharing their television revenue with other NCAA schools. Apparently Notre Dame decided to further maximize its revenue by creating its own deal. Many of Notre Dame's critics in intercollegiate sports argue that this action is bringing serious harm to intercollegiate football. And it is not difficult to see that trends such as these represent further exploitation of athletes, a large proportion of whom are black.

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